

Population - The Increasing Numbers and Rising Problems

Human population is by far the most serious problem the world is facing today.

WORLD POPULATION THROUGH THE AGES

It is estimated that the total world population about 50,000 years ago would have been around one million (1,000,000).

About 10,000 years ago, the total world population had reached approximately 5.3 million.

- He started living in settled communities in primitive huts.
- He had started domesticating animals - dog being the first.
- He learnt to sow crops and store food. This was the beginning of agriculture.

RAPID RISE IN POPULATION

(i) Industrial Revolution

A major phase in the growth of human population started with the scientific and industrial revolution, which began around the seventeenth century.

(ii) New Discoveries in Medical Science

The twentieth century (1901-2000) witnessed remarkable discoveries in medical science, specially the antibiotics and the prophylactic vaccinations against many diseases. This resulted in a sharp reduction in the number of deaths of all age groups, specially the infants and the old.

POPULATION EXPLOSION - A SERIOUS GLOBAL CONCERN

Population explosion refers to the rapid and a massive rise in the world population that has occurred over the last few hundred years. It began in the middle of the nineteenth century. India and China make one third of the total world population.

The total world population reached the 7 billion mark on 31st October 2011.

Six main reasons for sharp rise in WORLD HUMAN POPULATION in the recent past:

1. Better Health Care
2. Fewer Deaths
3. Food shortage minimised
4. Improved Nutrition
5. Large scale immunisation
6. Fewer infant deaths

Need for adopting control measures

Problems which are serious threats, for example :

1. Decreasing open spaces,
2. Shrinking of forests,
3. Increasing industrialisation causing air, water and soil pollution,
4. Rapid and intense shortage of drinking water and other resources,
5. Increasing pollution is a health hazard.

POPULATION IN INDIA

The trend of rise of population in India is as alarming as in the rest of the world. Except for a slight fall in 1911-21, the population of

India has been steadily increasing for the last 100 years. Since 1951, the growth rate has been very high.

A few years ago, it was estimated that India's population in 2001 A.D. would be around 760 million; but now, we find, it has already crossed one billion (1000 million) mark.

Indian Population Clock

- The current Indian population is a little more than 1.35 billion and is growing rapidly.
- India is the world's 7th largest country by area and the 2nd most populous country.
- Between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, the country grew by 17.7%, adding 181.5 million people. India's current yearly growth rate is 1.11%.
- The country's estimated population density in 2016 was about 445 per sq. km (World Bank).
- Delhi is India's most populous city, closely followed by Mumbai.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR POPULATION EXPLOSION IN INDIA

(1) Illiteracy: Most of the rural population which forms the bulk of our society are still illiterate, ignorant and superstitious. They also do not know the functioning of the human reproductive system.

(2) Traditional beliefs: Among the people from lower strata of society, children are regarded as a gift of God and a sign of prosperity. Therefore, they make no effort to avoid pregnancy.

(3) Mortality rate: Due to high infant mortality rate in our country, people from the economically weaker section think it safer to produce more children so that at least some may survive.

(4) Economic reasons: Children are considered to be helping hands to increase the family income.

(5) Religious and social customs: India is a centre of various religious and social customs, and as such most people do not accept family planning norms.

(6) Desire for a male child: Most Indian families still hold the view that a male child is essential for keeping up the name of the family. Further, a male child is usually a great help to the aged parents. These two reasons often contribute to getting several children before getting one son or sometimes not even that.

(7) Lack of recreation: Poor standard of living and poverty provide no recreation other than sex.

RIISING POPULATION - PRESSURE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

What is a resource?

Resource is any substance (natural or artificial), energy or organism which is used by humans for their welfare.

The six main resources under pressure are as follows:

1. Food rise by arithmetic progression but Population rise by geometric progression
2. Water
- 3 Land
4. Forests
5. Energy
6. Minerals

POPULATION GROWTH AND URBANISATION CAUSING SERIOUS PRESSURE ON RESOURCES

Changing Face of the Earth

The human population is growing very fast throughout the world. The villages are turning into towns, towns into cities and cities into megacities or metropolises a process covered under what we **call urbanisation**. Some of the major changes occurring in the process of urbanisation are as follows:

- More and more residential buildings, markets, schools, hospitals, etc.
- More streets and roads, more highways, railway lines and airports.
- More industrial installations, godowns and reservoirs, and so on.

Rising Living Standards of Growing Population

Living standards of the people are rising very fast.

- More and more household equipment the furniture, the crockery, electronic gadgets, the decoration articles and so on per household.
- More clothes, accessories, etc. — number of shirts, suits or sarees, skirts, belts, bags and shoes, etc. per individual.
- Some means of personal conveyance - a cycle, a motor cycle, a motor car, and then there are taxis, and other means of transport.

Need to Check Exploitative Use of Resources

Sustainable means which can be continued with no ill effect on the availability of the required items.

Sustainable development means the kind of development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable development can be achieved mainly by:

- Reduction of excessive use of natural resources.
- Recycling and reuse of resources wherever possible.

- More use of renewable resources such as solar energy, wind power, etc.

A FEW STATISTICAL TERMS

- **Demography** is the statistical study of human population. This is specially with reference to size and density, distribution and other vital statistics.
- **Population density** is the number of individuals per square kilometre (km²) at any given time.
- **Birth rate or natality** is the number of live births per 1000 people of population per year.
- **Death rate or Mortality** is the number of deaths per 1000 of population per year.
- **Growth rate of population** is the difference between the birth rate and the death rate.

POPULATION EDUCATION AND POPULATION CONTROL

1. The message about population problem should reach as many people as possible including those living in very remote areas.
2. People should be made aware of the advantages of having small families and, at the same time, the disadvantages of having many children.
3. The orthodox view, to have at least one son specially in Indian society, should be modified by education.
4. Marriageable age should be higher.
5. The married couples should be educated to delay the birth of their first child, to space the second with a sufficient interval for proper upbringing and to stop the third.

FAMILY WELFARE

The **inverted red triangle** has become a popular sign in India for family welfare.

The term FAMILY WELFARE has three aspects:

1. Family planning in terms of having a small family.
2. Total welfare of the small family, including the diet and nutrition of the child and of the pregnant mother.
3. Subsequent care of the children, e.g., immunisation and oral rehydration therapy, etc. to ensure survival of the young ones.

METHODS OF CONTRACEPTION

The common methods of contraception are as follows:

- 1. Hormonal Methods (Pills):** Various hormonal preparations come in the form of tablets or pills.
- 2. Barrier Methods**
- 3. Intra-Uterine Devices (IUDs):** The two devices commonly used in India are Lippe's Loop and Copper-T.
- 4. Surgical methods:**
 - (a) Tubectomy (for female):**
 - (b) Vasectomy (in male)**

INDUCED ABORTION OR MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (MTP)

Abortion is legally permitted only within 5 months of pregnancy.